Doing Research that Maximizes Impact
KT08 Forum - Module 4 – 8:30-noon
Banff, Alberta Canada, June 11, 2008

Setting the Stage

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Current State of Social Research

- Gap between Theory & Practice
  - A dual challenge
    - Academics: put your theories into practice!
    - Managers: put your practice into theory!
- Social research often not used for practice or science
    - Evidence-based practices often not implemented
    - Papers in management journals average less than one (.82) citation per year (Starbuck, 2000).
- Michael Gibbons: KT is an engagement process
  - Engagement requires participation
  - Knowledge changes in each step production & delivery
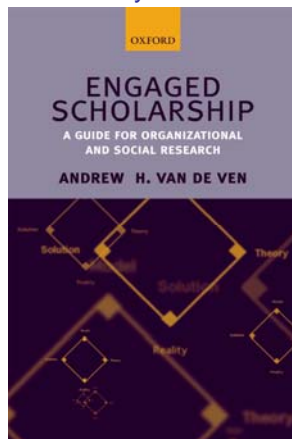 - It starts with boundary objects between different people

Propositions to Address KT Gap
in Kitson & Bisby, *Speeding up the Spread*

1. Society expects to be active partner in each step of the research/knowledge generating process.
2. Just as research is changing, so must their institutions.
3. Shift KT from end-of-grant to entire research process.
4. Clarify KT definitions, frameworks & multi-dis. methods.
5. Develop inter-national & disciplinary research agenda.
6. Contextualize KT with intended users/audiences.
7. More evaluation research of KT programs & theories.

How might we apply these propositions in our research studies?

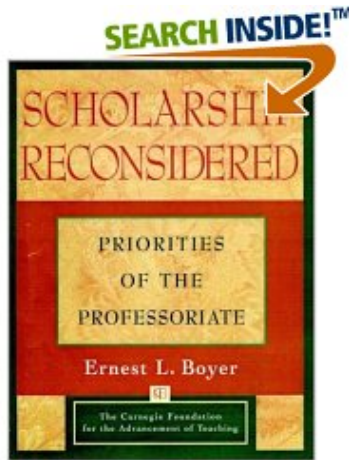## *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research*
by Andrew H. Van de Ven, (Oxford Univ. Press, 2007)

Book Chapters
1. Engaged Scholarship in a Professional School
2. Philosophy of Science
3. Problem Formulation
4. Theory Building
5. Process and Variance Models
6. Designing Variance Studies
7. Designing Process Studies
8. Communicating & Using Research Knowledge
9. Practicing Engaged Scholarship

Engaged Scholarship:
A Movement in Higher Education

SEARCH INSIDE!™

SCHOLARSHIP
RECONSIDERED

PRIORITIES
OF THE
PROFESSORIATE

Ernest L. Boyer

The Carnegie Foundation
for the Advancement of Teaching

Jossey-Bass, 1990

A Carnegie Foundation sponsored study defining the work of faculty as the scholarship of:

- Discovery
- Teaching
- Service
- Integration

Scholarship of Engagement

"Abundant evidence shows that the civic and academic health of any culture is vitally enriched as scholars and practitioners speak and listen carefully to each other" (Boyer, 1996: 15).
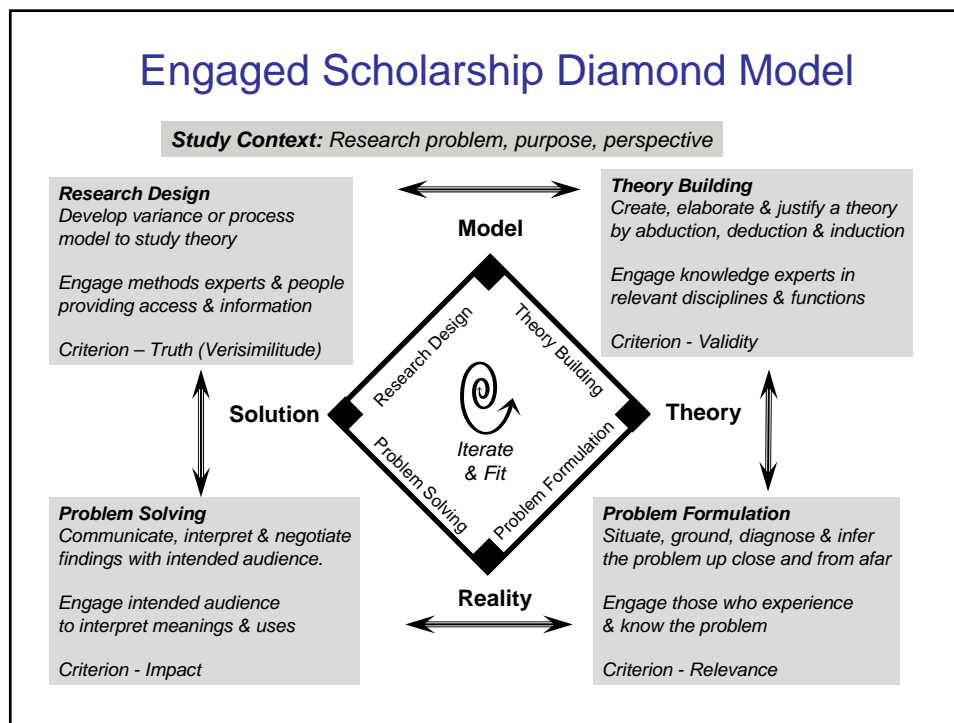

Engaged Scholarship

- A *form of inquiry* where researchers involve others and leverage their different perspectives to learn about a problem domain.

- An *identity* of how scholars view their relationships with their communities and their subject matter.
  – Other academics, practitioners, students

- A *relationship* involving negotiation, mutual respect, and collaboration to produce a learning community.

- Studying complex problems *with* and/or *for* practitioners and other stakeholders
  – Many ways to practice engaged scholarship

Proposal for Engaged Scholarship

Claim: We can increase the likelihood of advancing knowledge for science and profession by engaging with practitioners and other stakeholders in four steps of any study

1. Ground problem/question in reality up close & from afar.
2. Develop alternative theories to address the question.
3. Collect evidence to compare models of theories.
4. Communicate & apply findings to address the problem/question.

Engaged Scholarship Diamond Model

Study Context: Research problem, purpose, perspective

Research Design
Develop variance or process model to study theory

Engage methods experts & people providing access & information

Criterion – Truth (Verisimilitude)

Model

Theory Building
Create, elaborate & justify a theory by abduction, deduction & induction

Engage knowledge experts in relevant disciplines & functions

Criterion - Validity

Research Design / Theory Building / Problem Solving / Problem Formulation

Iterate & Fit

Solution

Theory

Problem Solving
Communicate, interpret & negotiate findings with intended audience.

Engage intended audience to interpret meanings & uses

Criterion - Impact

Reality

Problem Formulation
Situate, ground, diagnose & infer the problem up close and from afar

Engage those who experience & know the problem

Criterion - Relevance

4

Alternative Forms of Engaged Scholarship

Research Question/Purpose

		To Describe/Explain	To Design/Intervene
	Detached Outside	Basic Science With Stakeholder Advice 1	Policy/Design Science Evaluation Research For Professional Practice 3
Research Perspective	**Attached Inside**	2 Co-Produce Knowledge With Collaborators	4 Action/Intervention Research For a Client

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Your Observations Please!

- Questions & comments about engaged scholarship
  - –
- Do you practice engaged scholarship?
  - –
- How might I do my KT research differently as an engaged scholar?
  - –

Thank You!
http://umn.edu/~avandeve

Key Questions in Designing a Study

1. **What research problem and question are you studying?**
   - Ground the subject. Address who? what? where? when? why? & how? the problem/phenomenon exists up close & from afar
2. **What is your proposed answer to the research question?**
   - Is your answer any better than the status quo or a competing plausible alternative answer?
3. **How will you empirically study your proposed answer?**
   - Research design for gathering data to examine your proposal.
4. **How will you communicate and use study findings?**
   - How communicate, interpret & use findings with intended audience?
5. **What/Who's perspective will you take?**
   - Who will you engage to answer above questions?
   - For whom and with whom are you conducting the study?
   - Who's point of view will you take?
     - **Don't go it alone!!**